

HELLSTROM et al
Appl. No. 10/578,848
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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Previously Presented) A method of predicting whether an individual having hepatitis B virus (HBV) infection will respond to interferon alpha (IFN α) treatment; the method comprising;

determining the presence or absence of antibodies reactive with a preS1 peptide consisting of the sequence of residues 94-117 (SEQ ID NO:1) in a pre-treatment sample obtained from the individual,

the presence of said antibodies in said sample being indicative that said individual will respond to said treatment.

2. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1 comprising detecting the presence of said antibodies in said sample and thereby determining that the individual will respond to IFN α treatment.

3. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1 comprising detecting the absence of said antibodies in said sample and thereby determining that the individual will not respond to IFN α treatment.

4. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1 wherein the individual has chronic HBV infection.

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5. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1 wherein the individual is HBeAg positive.

6. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1 wherein the individual is HBeAg negative.

7. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1 wherein the antibodies are IgG or IgM antibodies.

8. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1 wherein the sample is a blood, serum or plasma sample.

9. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1 comprising;
contacting the sample with a preS1 peptide consisting of the sequence of residues 94-117 (SEQ ID NO:1) and;
determining binding of said antibodies to said peptide.

10. (Original) A method according to claim 9 wherein the peptide comprises a detectable label.

11. (Original) A method according to claim 9 wherein said peptide is immobilised.

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12. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 9 wherein said binding is detected with a labelled secondary antibody.

13.-19. (Cancelled).

20. (Previously Presented) A method of treating a hepatitis B infection in an individual comprising;

identifying the individual as responsive to interferon alpha (IFN α) treatment using a method according to claim 1, and;

administering IFN α to said individual.

21. (Cancelled).

22. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 20 wherein corticosteroid is administered to the individual.

23. (Cancelled).